

# Defeat Debt

Credit Advisors Foundation

Volume 52, Issue 6

## Back to School Tax Holiday Saves Parents

School bells will be ringing across the nation for students in less than a month. Most students dread the beginning of the school season; however, they do look forward to purchasing school supplies. Most parents dread this back-to-school ritual. Gone are the days when students just needed crayons, notebooks, and pencils. Now laptops, high-tech calculators, and a “cool” wardrobe are considered necessities for the school year.

Some states offer “tax break holidays” in order to assist financially stressed parents with purchasing necessary school items. Most states specify what can be purchased: computers, clothing, school supplies, and Energy Star electronics or appliances.

The sales tax holiday can be considered a six to eight percent discount. It may not seem like much,

but when you are purchasing school supplies for multiple children or big ticket items the savings add up.

The following states have announced their sales tax holidays (those from Alaska, Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire and

Oregon can skip this list since you have no sales tax):

**Alabama** – August 7-9  
clothing, computers, school supplies and books

**Connecticut** – August 16-22; clothing and footwear

**District of Columbia** – August 1-9; clothing and school supplies

**Georgia** – July 30 - August 2; school supplies, clothing and computers and October 1 – 4; Energy Star products

**Iowa** – August 7-8; clothing

**Louisiana** – August 7-8; tangible personal property

**Mississippi** – July 31 -

August 1; clothing and footwear

**Missouri** – August 7-9;

clothing, computers, and school supplies

**New Mexico** – August 7-9;

clothing, computers, and school supplies

**North Carolina** – August 7-

9; clothing, school supplies, instructional materials, computers, other computer equipment, and sports equipment and November 6 – 8; Energy Star products

**Oklahoma** – August 7-9, clothing

**South Carolina** – August 7-

9; clothing, school supplies, computers, and other educational supplies

**Tennessee** – August 7-9;

clothing, school supplies, and computers

**Texas** – August 21-23;

clothing and backpacks

**Virginia** – August 7-9;

clothing and school supplies and October 9-12; Energy Star products

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# Homeownership

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**West Virginia** – September 1 – November 30; Energy Star products

If you do not see your state listed, check their Department of Revenue's web site. Some states are still deciding if they will have a sales tax holiday, when it will be, and what items qualify.

Be aware that there may be a minimum purchase requirement in order to qualify for the sales tax holiday. Most of these minimums are easy to achieve.

## End of the Summer Flings

If it's July Fourth, it can only mean one thing: the halfway point of "real" summer. It's not halfway if you count actual days since summer started. But once you get to August first, it becomes "Back to School" season and your focus changes.

So here are some last-minute ways to get more summer fun out of the next few weeks while still staying on budget:

- Stage a neighborhood water fight. This activity can include all ages and everyone up and down the block. Balloons and soaker/squirt pistols are not that expensive. Establish teams; hide "ammo" in different locations around the neighborhood; outline parameters and set limits.
- Take a trip to a "You Pick It" berry patch. Spend some time collecting the freshest fruit of the season to take home. Once you are home, make some preserves, it is easier than you think. Kids will love making their own jelly and jam for school lunches. Check out the directions on a package of Sure Jel Low Sugar Pectin. You can find it in your local grocery store. It uses half

Before purchasing school supplies make a plan.

- Inventory school supplies left over from last year. Do your children need five brand new notebooks when two out of the five purchased last year were barely used?
- Obtain a copy of your child's school supply list and divide it into wants and needs.
- Make a list of school supply needs, take the list, and stick to it.

the sugar (or no sugar) of regular jellies and requires no pressure cooker. If you use the freezer jam recipes there are no special jars or lids either.



- Spend an evening catching fireflies (if you have them) and making s'mores. Even if you live in a location without access to an appropriate outdoor space for a cook or camp fire, many public parks have grilling facilities you can use.

- Splash in the water! Go to the local pool,

nearby lake or YMCA. If you have no local pool, check with your local parks or water department for hydrant party locations and schedules.

- Don't forget to check for free activities through your local library, visitors and convention bureau or parks department. You may be able to find ethnic festivals or historical re-enactments.
- Learn to play Frisbee golf with the family. Most cities have at least one public park set up to play this game. Inexpensive and competitive fun for

For those who may not need to purchase school supplies but are interested in taking advantage of the sales tax break on Energy Star products, visit the Energy Star web site (<http://www.energystar.gov/>). There you will find information to help you make an informed decision before purchasing big-ticket items such as refrigerators, water heaters, or computers. You can also search for rebates on Energy Star products. As with school supply shopping, make a plan and stick to it.

By taking advantage of the tax break holidays and making a plan before purchasing, the beginning of the school year will be more enjoyable for parents and their pocketbooks.

the whole family.

- Discover Geo-Caching. Scavenger hunting for the technologically inclined. Find themed caches others have hidden. Create a themed cache of your own and hide it. Make up clues for complete strangers to follow in order to locate your cache.
- Load "self guided walking tour" and your city or state into an internet search engine. See what pops up. Most of these tours are free and can point out things you never knew about where you live.
- Volunteer for a charity event. There are many bike rides and walks for good causes that can use the support. Giving back to your community is always a good way to spend your time.

The most important thing is to schedule time for fun before time slips away. Certainly you have several ideas of your own. Please share them with us at [info@creditadvisors.org](mailto:info@creditadvisors.org) and we will post them on our Facebook and Twitter pages. Enjoy the rest of the summer!

## John Is On Your Side

Credit Advisors is proud of our dedicated staff. This year we are introducing our Account Managers. They are the “go-to” person for those on a Credit Advisors Debt Management Program. Account Managers make sure every aspect of the program runs smoothly.

John Taphorn serves clients in: Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and Ohio.

**Defeat Debt:** How long have you been with Credit Advisors?

**John:** September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998. (About 11 years.)

**Defeat Debt:** What is your favorite aspect of your job?

**John:** Helping people through difficult times.



**Defeat Debt:** What has been the biggest change since you began at Credit Advisors?

**John:** Tighter restrictions with the creditors.

**Defeat Debt:** What are the benefits of being on a Credit Advisors Debt Management Program?

**John:** Having someone on your side that cares about your financial future. Your bills are paid on time. Your credit rating will improve. You receive benefits that most people do not get.

**Defeat Debt:** What endangers a Debt Management Program?

**John:** A lack of effective communication. The client must take an active role in their program.

**Defeat Debt:** What about the management of accounts would surprise most clients?

**John:** Most clients would be surprised to know how often we are negotiating with their creditors, to limit or eliminate their contact with their creditors.

**Defeat Debt:** If you could let your clients know one thing that would increase the success of their program, what would it be?

**John:** Review every piece of correspondence that they get from their creditors. If they do not understand it, ask questions until they do, or ask their Account Manager.

**Defeat Debt:** You are Credit Advisors' resident weatherman. What is your favorite type of cloud?

**John:** Rear Flank Downdraft: It means that a tornado is likely close by.

# PIF

It takes time, perseverance, and dedication to become debt free.

Each month we honor those who paid off all their creditors with a Credit Advisors Debt Management Program.

**June 2009**

160

Debt Management Programs  
Paid In Full  
Congratulations!

## Major Cities With the Highest Credit Card Debt

Forbes.com recently published a list of the most indebted American cities. This figure represents the total debt of the area, as reported by Equifax, divided by the number of households in the area, according to the US Census. The average debt per household figure was divided by the median household income in the area. Below is the list of cities along with their percentage of income to credit card debt.

10. Sacramento, California - 15.11 percent
9. Las Vegas, Nevada - 15.14 percent
8. San Antonio, Texas - 15.95 percent
7. San Diego, California - 15.98 percent
6. Riverside, California - 16.19 percent
5. Orlando, Florida - 16.37 percent
4. Jacksonville, Florida - 16.38 percent
3. Los Angeles, California - 16.81 percent
2. Tampa, Florida - 17.10 percent
1. Miami, Florida - 22.61 percent



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Were on the Web!

[Web Site: www.creditadvisors.org](http://www.creditadvisors.org)

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## Get Out of Debt with No Regret !!



## Free Financial Seminars

### Budget Workshop

August 14, 2009

11am and 2pm

### Credit Advisors

1850 South 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68124

Please RSVP

Call: 402-514-3341

E-mail: [todd@creditadvisors.org](mailto:todd@creditadvisors.org)

If you cannot attend in-person, call our conference line at 1-866-285-7780 code 4425358.

### Budget For the Holidays

October 9, 2009

11am and 2pm

